

## Making Beeswax Candles with Essential Oils

By Desiree Bell

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Making beeswax candles is a fun and easy project, perfect for the holiday season. Beeswax is the part of honeycombs that can be melted down, filtered and used for making candles. The wax is produced by honeybees transforming the pollen and nectars of flowers into a most amazing array of products including honey, royal jelly, propolis, bee pollen and beeswax.

Young worker bees between 12 and 17 days old produce the beeswax in four pairs of glands located on the underside of their abdomen. Bees need to eat 10 parts of honey to produce one part beeswax, and

it is estimated that bees must fly around 150,000 miles to produce just one pound of beeswax.



**Beeswax is the part of honeycombs that can be used for making candles.**

Beekeepers obtain beeswax from three sources within the hive:

cappings, combs and hive scrapings. If the beekeeper is planning to use or sell the wax for candle making it is obtained from the cappings or rendered from the comb in which no brood rearing occurred. These sources will provide the wax with a lemony-yellow color and natural aroma of honey essence.

When beeswax candles are burned, they produce white, round flames and smoke the least of all types of candles depending on the purity of the wax and type of wicking. Beeswax candles can burn up to twice as long as paraffin type candles.

Burning candles inside your home or outside illuminating the garden can transform an environment into a place of enchantment. Look around the house or at thrift stores to find containers that can be reused to make candles. Jars, tins and teacups all make decorative holders for the beeswax. Polyurethane molds can also be used to make small or floating candles.

Making beeswax candles is very simple once you have acquired the supplies. Create container candles by melting the beeswax in a double broiler to 180 degrees on an electric plate or stove burner.

**Create container candles by melting beeswax in a double broiler.**

Since the aroma can be as important to the ambience of room as the decorative candle, 10 to 40 drops of pure essential oil can be added to every 5 1/2 ounces of wax when it is as cool as possible.

Choose essential oils not only for the fragrance, but for other effects they produce. Oils that induce relaxation can be used for a special evening and oils that stimulate can be used to get a conversation going.

Essential oils used during the holiday season can include cinnamon, clove, orange, mandarin, pine, cedarwood, frankincense and myrrh. A blend of mandarin, geranium and cinnamon has a pleasant aroma and at the same time can create effects for specific memories, moods and appetites.

Purchase wicks with a metal holder from the local craft store. Place the wick in the container and slowly pour in the melted wax. Stop pouring around 1/4 inch short of the candle's eventual height, reserving enough wax for one or two top offs. Allow candle to cool, pour in reserved wax, making sure the new layer of wax covers the first and flows to the sides of the container. Let cool completely.

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This season create magical holidays by illuminating your home with beeswax candles or by giving the gift of light to a family member, friend or a person needing to have their life brightened.

### **Making Candles: Safety Tips**

- + Always heat wax in a double broiler.
- + Wear gloves when working with wax.
- + Monitor wax temperature with a thermometer.
- + When wax is hot enough to smoke, it's in danger of igniting.
- + Never leave heating wax unattended.
- + Keep children and pets away from work areas.

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